

Oil Spill Prevention & Response

Oil spill prevention is a high priority for the U.S. Navy. When spills do occur, the Navy has equipment pre-staged worldwide and uses highly trained personnel to contain and clean up spills as rapidly as possible.

- The best way to minimize oil spill effects is to keep oil out of the water in the first place. The Navy has an aggressive spill prevention program that is improving oil handling procedures, personnel training, equipment reliability, and design and maintenance of ship engines.
 - The Navy continues to strive to reduce the number and volume of oil spills. Throughout its spill prevention program, the Navy concentrates on the entire spectrum of oil handling and is committed to continuous improvement.
 - Navy activities report all oil spills, ranging from a small sheen (<1 cup) to vessel groundings (>100,000 gal), including spills from unknown sources. Reports are made through the Navy chain of command as well as to the National Response Center, the federal government's national communications center.
 - The Navy maintains an in-house capability to respond to spills of all sizes. In addition to pollution control equipment strategically positioned at shore locations around the globe, every Navy ship is equipped with an oil spill kit that is designed to prevent spills from entering the water. The Navy routinely exercises response plans and equipment to ensure preparedness.
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- Navy oil skimmer underway*
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- Navy oil skimmer with boom deployed*
- The Navy works closely with the U.S. Coast Guard, EPA, state on-scene coordinators, and other affected stakeholders to contain oil spills from any source. For example, Navy fleet oil skimmers collected half of the crude oil recovered from the Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska.
 - In response to the Gulf of Mexico oil spill of 2010, the Navy supplied approximately 100,000 feet of oil containment boom to reduce the environmental impact of the spill. Naval Sea Systems Command's (NAVSEA) Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV) positioned equipment from Texas to Florida to support the oil spill response effort. In addition to the boom systems, SUPSALV also shipped 23 oil skimming systems to help clean up the spill. Navy equipment there has collected the equivalent of over 23,000 barrels of oil.
 - Oil spill prevention and response efforts are just two of the many ways the Navy works hard to protect the environment while meeting its national security requirements.

